



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

JUNE 2026 ISSUE



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

- A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Corporate Department for inspection by the Elected Members.

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CORPORATE

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and Mayor Cllr. John Coonan at the at the first national meeting of Local Community Safety Partnerships.



Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh and Mayor Cllr. John Coonan welcome the FTD Brothers, Jordan and Cian Adams to Kilkenny



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh presenting Peter Lynch with a Cathaoirleach's Certificate



Mayor Cllr. John Coonan at the photocall for Six after 6 - Summer Cultural Series



PLANNING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total January to May	
	2026	2025
Planning Applications Received	356	366
Planning Applications Granted	307	293
Planning Applications Refused	20	29
Complaints Received	59	64
Warning Letters Issued	33	46
Enforcements Notices Issued	19	23
Cases Closed	152	77
Cases sent for legal prosecution	3	4
Section 5's Received	45	31
Section 5's Decided Upon	41	28

FORWARD PLANNING

St. Canice's Campus/Lacken Masterplan

The Draft Masterplan for St. Canice's Campus/Lacken was published on the 22nd May and submissions are invited until the 3rd July. A drop-in public Information Session will be held on Wednesday, 10th June, 2026 from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. at the Medieval Mile Museum where the Draft Masterplan will be on display and the Plan Team will be available to discuss.

Variation 8B

Proposed Variation 8B to reflect the requirements of the Government's *National Planning Framework Implementation Guidelines* in relation to the accommodation of growth in the settlements of Callan, Thomastown and Graigueenamanagh commenced public display on 1st May and submissions were invited until 29th May, 2026. The Chief Executive's Report on submissions will be presented at the June Council meeting.

Variation 10

Proposed Variation 10 to incorporate the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Kilkenny City into the Development Plan, commenced public display on the 15th May. The SUMP presents a strategic plan to help manage future growth in the area promoting positive outcomes for the local community with a focus on transport and mobility. Submissions are invited until 12th June. A drop-in Public Information Session was held in the Medieval Mile Museum on Thursday, 21st May.

Castlecomer Settlement Plan

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) issued a notice in April in respect of the Castlecomer Settlement Plan (Variation 5) suspending the zoning objectives for lands in Flood Zones A and B in Castlecomer pending an assessment of the flood risk on the lands. Representatives from the OPR attended the Castlecomer Municipal District meeting in May to outline the process.

The Council will shortly commence the preparation of a Variation to incorporate flood risk mitigation measures into the Settlement Plan. The Council website will be kept updated as this process proceeds.

Taking in Charge

Works are progressing on the following Estates:

- Cluain Glasan, Kilkenny
- Danville Road Industrial Estate Kilkenny

Active Land Management

Residential Zoned Land Tax

The public consultation period finished on 1st April, 2026. Seven submissions were received. Determinations on submissions received are due by 30th June, 2026.

Conservation

The Conservation Office manages all protected structures in Kilkenny County and City. These structures are recognised for the following special interest: Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical, Social.

An advisory service on conservation matters is provided to the public and colleagues while the conservation grants and funding applications are also delivered.

For the month of May, the Conservation Officer completed reports on the following:

- Planning Referrals..... 9
- Further Information requests 5
- Clarification of Further Information requests..... 0
- Section 57 Declarations..... 3
- Post Planning 1
- Part 8 0

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2026:

Engagement with all successful applicants underway.

The Historic Structures Fund 2026:

Engagement with all successful applicants underway.

Building Control

Valid Commencement Notices Received	Valid Disability Access Applications Received
May 2026.....144	May 2026..... 30
May 2025.....129	May 2025..... 19
May 2024.....163	May 2024..... 23
May 2023.....114	May 2023..... 15

TOWN REGENERATION OFFICE

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

To date the Council have paid out €8.5 million to successful applicants. The following are the full statistics up to end of May, 2026:

Number of applications submitted to-date	423
Number of approvals/approvals in principle to-date	352
Grant drawdown to-date	152
Number of queries during the month of May	94

In March this year, the Department of Housing announced an extension of the vacant homes to include vacant over the shop residential space. The extended version now includes a grant for Over the Shop Units up to a maximum of €135,000 and a separate Expert Advice Grant up to €5,000 to address fire safety, access, planning, etc. and a third part grant for the conversion of former commercial/public use building.

The work of the Town Regeneration Office and Vacancy Team is seen as a critical function for Kilkenny County Council. It has seen many successes throughout the County and City with 117 homes already removed from dereliction and occupied. Many other properties have been prevented from entering into dereliction following engagement between the owner(s) and the Town Regeneration Office/Vacancy Team. Works carried out to these properties have had a marked improved visual appearance in our City, towns and villages.

Derelict Sites

Compulsory Purchase Orders are in progress for 4 properties:

- Donaguile, Castlecomer
- Coolagh Road, Callan,
- Corcoran Terrace, Kilkenny
- Market Street, Thomastown.

CAPITAL DELIVERY & PARKS

Paulstown Town Park Masterplan

A planning application for a Masterplan for the creation of a multifunctional communal park in Paulstown was advertised under Part 8 on the 1st May 2026.

As part of the above process a public consultation evening/drop in event was held in Paulstown on Wednesday 27th May which gave members of the public the opportunity to discuss the proposed project with the technical staff involved. The event was well attended and the feedback received will be taken on board. The proposed Masterplan remains open for submissions or observations up to 4.00 p.m. on Friday, 12th June, 2026.



The proposal provides for a high quality, community centered and multifunctional local park on a greenfield site, adjoining the local playground. This project is being funded under the Town Centre First Scheme.

Clover Centre Masterplan

A planning application for a Masterplan for the creation of a multifunctional communal park in the Clover Centre field in Christendom, Ferrybank was advertised under Part 8 on the 15th May, 2026.

In addition to the two public consultation evenings held during the development of the proposed Masterplan which was prior to the Part 8 notice, a third and final public consultation session for this proposal will take place on Wednesday, 17th June at the Abbey Community Centre at 7.00 p.m.

The proposed development comprises of the following:

- A multi-use pitch playing with spectator provision;
- Community use building;
- Dog friendly park;
- Women's/Men's Shed compound;
- Walking track;
- Council compound;
- Padel court;
- Ball wall;
- Biodiversity enhancements;
- Parking;
- New entrance and exit access road;
- New pedestrian access and access bridge off the L7473-3;
- A pedestrian crossing;
- All other associated works;



Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development can be made up to 4.00 p.m. on Friday, 26th June 2026.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme - Update

Kilkenny Countryside Park - Dunmore Trailhead Link



Works have been completed on the new connectivity link between Dunmore Community Hall carpark and the Mass Path which leads to the Kilkenny Countryside Park. Visitors to the Park, when using this carpark, will no longer need to walk along the busy N77 national road to access the Mass Path Trail. This work would not have been possible without the agreement and the positive ongoing co-operation of the Dunmore Community Hall Committee, which we would like to acknowledge. This connectivity link is a further addition to the popular walking loop leading to the Kilkenny Countryside Park. It is noted that pedestrian counters were installed at each entrance to the Park in February of this year and we are delighted to report that on average circa. 150 visitors are visiting the park every day.

Brandon Hill Trail Enhancement and Upland Protection Scheme

The detail design and tender documents for the above are now completed and the relevant consents are in place to allow this project commence to the next stage. To this end, a tender notice has been published on e-tenders seeking a suitably qualified specialist contractor to undertake this work. The core aim of this project is to reduce the negative impact on this upland habitat caused by recreational use along the summit trails, as evident in the image. The secondary objective is to provide users with a more defined, safer and attractive informal upland-style path to the summit and cross.



Kilmacow Community Complex

Funding was received under ORIS to refurbish the pedestrian footbridge over River Blackwater into the Kilmacow Community Complex, along with trail enhancements, new trail signage including distance markers and age friendly seating and parking provision. Following a competitive tendering process a consultancy team has recently been appointed to provide technical support with the bridge refurb and associated riverside works.



Woodstock Gardens & Arboretum

On Friday the 29th June, Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh officially launched our All-terrain wheelchair service at Woodstock. This free service is another important milestone in our ongoing mission to make this wonderful amenity more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming for people of all abilities.



We were really delighted to have staff and service users from Aurora Kilkenny joining us on the day to try out our new all-terrain wheelchairs, and for their very positive feedback on the benefits of this initiative. Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh noted in her address *“that these wheelchairs are designed for freedom. They allow visitors who may have faced mobility challenges to explore the forest trails, the gardens, the river walks, and the wider landscape of Woodstock with confidence and comfort.”*

COMMUNITY

Community Projects

The Table below outlines in summary ongoing projects and schemes in the Community Department.

Town & Village Scheme			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	May Status
Callan 2023	King's River Town & Village Project – Riverbank and amenity area	€247,500	In progress works will be delayed due to change of legislation
Dunnamaggin Local Community Group 2023	The transformation of a community green space into and events amenity for all the community knows as Madge's Garden	€247,500	Works 100% complete
Callan Project Development Measure 2024	Develop plans to establish an outdoor classroom community space in Abbey Field and examine the re-development of a derelict cottage in Moate Field and complete biodiversity studies on both sites	€49,950	Surveys ongoing
Paulstown Community Group Project Development Measure 2024	Complete feasibility and design studies for the creation of a centre point in the village, consisting of an open public green space with seating and leisure facilities. This will redevelop the village centre and provide accessibility between the main street and residential areas	€49,950	Part 8 out for public consultation
Glenmore 2025	Renovate two vacant buildings into community café & shop	€500,000	Funding approved
Johnstown 2025	Public realm enhancements. Development of a public space for activities in the square, Johnstown.	€300,000	Funding approved
Callan 2025	Refurbishment of ground floor of 18 Upper Bridge Street, Callan for general business use and the re-instatement of an original carriageway to improve pedestrian access to this town centre location	€300,000	Funding approved Collaborative project with Housing accommodation on first floor

Rural Regeneration Development Fund			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	May Status
Piltown	Phase 1 of the project comprises of main street urban renewal enhancement, parking bays, EV charging points, and bicycle bays x2	€2,180,931	Pre Tender Approval
Glenmore	Develop the Southeast Greenway Connectivity Link and Pink Rock Cycle Loop & Amenity Trail	€2,356,423	Pre Tender Approval
Thomastown	Thomastown Library and upgrade to Community Centre	€4,013,115	Complete awaiting final payment cert from contractor Complete

Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme			
Community Group/ Year Approved	Project Description	Grant	May Status
Johnstown Sports Field 2022	Contribution to development of walkway around complex	€40,000	Works in progress 90% complete
Mooncoin Celtic AFC 2023	LED Floodlighting for extra training area	€20,000	Due to commence in May 2026
Gowran Community Complex 2024	Contribution towards the refurbishment of a community hub	€27,000	Works 80% complete
Glenmore Camogie Club 2025	Contribution towards the re-instatement of walkway	€29,000	Not yet commenced
Mullinavat Drama Group 2025	Lighting, Sound, Projector, Screen, Curtains	€11,000	Partially complete
Marian Hall Kilmacow 2025	Installation of heating, bathrooms, kitchen	€11,000	Works to commence May 2026
Kilkenny Girl Guides 2025	Emergency Lighting & Fire Alarm	€15,000	Works to commence June 2026
Kilkenny SOS Lawn Bowls 2025	Fencing, Lighting, Bicycle Bays, shed	€30,000	Contractor appointed
Freshford Town AFC 2025	Floodlighting for all weather pitch	€32,000	Works in progress 90% complete
St. Joseph's Athletic Club 2025	Shelter and walking track	€11,000	Works nearly finalised
Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club 2025	Storage racking for rowing boats	€15,000	Works complete and payment of grant made
Callan AFC Football Club 2024	Dressing Room upgrade	€36,000	Awaiting paperwork from club to arrange grant payment

CLÁR			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	May Status
Galmoy Community Hall 2023	Provision of a MUGA	€30,015	Extension of time granted by Dept, issues with lease
Windgap Handball Alley 2024	External insulation of two outside walls	€29,419	Change of scope of works submitted for approval
Windgap GAA 2024	Works to include tarmacadam to driveway and parking area	€38,307	Works complete awaiting paperwork from group for payment of grant
Naomh Aodhan Community Centre CLG 2024	Upgrade works on rebuilding and refurbishing of handball alley and ground works	€44,312	Works 80% complete
St. Brendan's N.S. Muckalee 2025	Pitch Development	€65,000	Tender process ongoing
Lisdowney GAA 2025	Construction of new MUGA and Ball Wall	€65,000	Evaluation of tenders underway
Coolagh Community Hall Upgrading Project 2025	Hall and Kitchen upgrade	€77,022	Contractor on site and works have commenced
Moin Ruadh National School 2025	Construction of new MUGA with carparking area and sensory garden	€100,000	Due to commence
Killanaspick Lighting Project 2025	Roadway lighting	€22,500	To commence Autumn 2026
Kilmoganny GAA 2025	Lawnmower for community area	€35,424	Works complete awaiting paperwork from group to pay

Community Recognition Fund			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	May Status
Christian Youth Centre	Development of existing building to provide community space, meeting rooms	€390,607	Works in progress
Fr. McGrath Centre	Installation of Solar Panels, Painting of building and installation of windows	€100,474	Works complete
Ballyragget Community Hall	Renovation of CYMS Hall	€173,000	Procurement process ongoing. Extension of time sought until December 2026

AGE FRIENDLY

National Older Peoples Council Convention

Kilkenny Older People's Council attended the National Older People's Council Convention, held from 6th to 8th May 2026 at the Sheraton Hotel in Athlone and hosted by Westmeath County Council. The convention brought together representatives from all 31 Older People's Councils under the theme *"Thriving Together – Age Friendly Sustainable Communities."* The event highlighted the essential role that OPCs play in shaping positive, meaningful change for older people across Ireland.

A central focus of the convention was the critical need for stronger local coordination to support those most at risk during emergencies. This sparked an essential dialogue on the implementation of a unified vulnerable persons register a tool designed to help local authorities and emergency responders act with greater precision during severe weather. There was a variety of practical and focused sessions on being Storm Ready, understanding Dementia, and conducting Public Realm Walkability audits to ensure our streets are accessible for all.



Colette Power with participants of the Public Realm Walkability Audit Workshop at the National Older Persons Convention 2026

Singing for Memory Workshops

The Singing for Memory groups in Kilkenny are designed to support individuals living with dementia, along with their families, loved ones, and carers. The programme aims to provide a supportive and relaxed social environment where participants can connect with others, fostering a sense of inclusion, togetherness, personal achievement, and self-worth.

While individuals living with dementia may experience challenges with everyday memory, research indicates that musical memory is often retained, as the areas of the brain associated with music are typically less affected. Engagement in music and singing has been shown to enhance mood, provide cognitive stimulation, and promote social interaction.

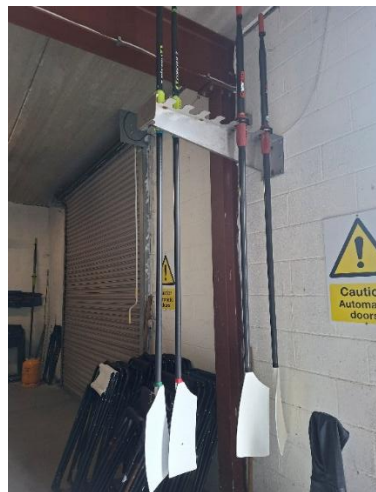
These workshops offer meaningful opportunities for participants to engage in shared activities with their families and carers, strengthening connections and supporting overall wellbeing. The programme commenced on the 13th of May and will run until the 9th of December 2026. The sessions are held at the Bishop's Birch Centre, Leggettsrath West, Kilkenny (R95 V098). For further information, please contact Kairen Waloch on 086 3262844.

Community & Cultural Capital Facilities Grant Scheme

Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club

Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club was awarded funding of €15,000 under Kilkenny County Council's Community and Cultural Capital Facilities Grant Scheme. The funding supported the installation of fixed and mobile racking systems for the safe storage of rowing boats.

The club currently maintains a fleet of 35 boats, including singles, doubles, quads, and eights. These vessels are both fragile and high-value, requiring appropriate storage solutions to ensure their protection and the safety of those handling them. The recently installed racking infrastructure provides essential dedicated storage within the boathouse and supports the safe management of equipment. This investment represents a significant enhancement to the club's facilities, enabling improved protection of boats and rowing equipment both on-site and during transport to competitions nationwide. The club has welcomed the funding as an important contribution to sustaining and developing its activities.



Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club fixed racking system installed under CCFCFS funding

Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership

The Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership hosted its inaugural community engagement event on the 11th of May, 2026 at the Rivercourt Hotel. The event was well attended and brought together a wide range of stakeholders with a shared commitment to enhancing public safety and community wellbeing across the County. It forms part of the ongoing implementation of the national community safety framework, which seeks to strengthen collaboration between local authorities, An Garda Síochána, community organisations, and local residents.

The event provided an important platform for engagement, information sharing, and dialogue. It also highlighted the importance of proactive communication and the ongoing development of trust between statutory agencies and the wider community. Attendees included representatives from Kilkenny County Council, An Garda Síochána, the HSE, the Fire Service, local development organisations, youth services, community groups, and members of the public.

The programme featured presentations from the DRIVE Campaign, representatives of the Night-Time Economy, and An Garda Síochána. Some of the key issues addressed included drug-related intimidation, online fraud, and online safety for young people. The event further showcased a range of existing supports and initiatives operating across the County, demonstrating the strong collaborative structures already in place. Participating organisations highlighted successful partnership projects and identified opportunities for enhanced community engagement. This contributed to increased awareness of available services and encouraged continued participation from local residents and groups.

Overall, the event represents a significant step in strengthening community safety structures in Kilkenny. It reflects a strong collective commitment to coordinated and inclusive working practices. Feedback and insights gathered on the day will inform future planning and support ongoing efforts to ensure that Kilkenny remains a safe, resilient, and inclusive community for all residents.



Mayor John Coonan, Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick and Maria O' Shea



Garda Sgt. James Neary, An Garda Síochána



Siobhan Maher, National DRIVE project coordinator



Peter "Chap" Cleere T.D, Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, Maria O' Shea, Mayor John Coonan, Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Cllr Tomás Breathnach, Cllr Seán ÓhArgáin, Anne Marie Shortall and Cllr Pat Dunphy

Healthy Ireland

The first Garda Youth Awards for the new Waterford/Kilkenny Garda Division took place on Wednesday the 20th of May 2026 at a special ceremony in the Tower Hotel in Waterford. The annual Garda Youth Awards recognises young people for their achievements, leadership and positive contributions to their communities. As part of a Healthy Ireland Funded project, Newpark Family Resource Centre implemented a youth-led project aimed at engaging the wider community and raising awareness about the health and wellbeing impacts of smoking and vaping. The project called “*The Air That I Breathe*” won the overall group category on the night.



Garda Youth Awards in the Tower Hotel in Waterford



Winners of the overall group category, Newpark Close FRC “Air that I breathe” project

Comhairle na nÓg present at Kilkenny County Council Meeting to Promote Smoke and Vape-Free Spaces

Young people from the Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg addressed a meeting of Kilkenny County Council on 18 May to highlight the health impacts of smoking and vaping on young people and to advocate for more smoke and vape-free public spaces across Kilkenny. Over the past 18 months, Comhairle na nÓg groups in Carlow and Kilkenny have been working together on the Healthy Ireland & CYPSC supported “Not Around Us” campaign, an initiative aimed at promoting smoke and vape-free spaces for children and young people. During the presentation, members of Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg called on Kilkenny County Council to expand the rollout of “Not Around Us” signage to parks and playgrounds throughout the County.

The Council Members welcomed and supported the proposal to extend the campaign to parks and playgrounds across Kilkenny and thanks the young people for encouraging the public health messaging to discourage the use of vapes and smoking in young people and for the next generation to come.



Attendees of the Comhairle NAU Council Meeting on the 18th May

LEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Summary of 2026 Awards to Businesses

- €104,242 in direct financial assistance was approved for 8 manufacture /export service businesses in located in throughout the County.
 - €32,270 awarded in Feasibility Study Grant
 - €44,283 awarded in Business Priming Grant Assistance
 - €20,615 in Business Expansion Grant assistance
 - €7,073 in Market Explorer Grant
- 4 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses
- 11 businesses have availed of the Digital for Business programme to prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the enterprise.
- 13 businesses have availed of the Energy Efficiency Grant totalling €119,977 to support investment in technologies and equipment of enterprises
- 14 business have availed of the green for business consultancy support scheme. This scheme supports businesses to become greener and environmentally friendly.
- 210 people participated on focused small business training, including 36 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme
- 66 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR

LEAN In Action – Site visit



On 29th May, with the support of the Local Enterprise Office, 5 local businesses visited the Adman Steel facility near Gorey, Co Wexford. The immersive, on-site tour highlighted the continuous improvements and Lean efficiency principles that have been implemented and the direct benefits that Adman Steel Sheds haven experienced.



Create Kilkenny Programme

The Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny in conjunction with the newly established Kilkenny Craft Guild organised a programme for 15 emerging creative businesses "CREATE" Kilkenny – Grow Your Creative Business 2026. The aim of the programme is to develop and support relatively new and emerging creative businesses to get to the 'next level' commercially; encourage those who want to inject fresh ideas and approaches to product development, branding and sales. This tailored programme consisted of a series of half day workshops and individual one-to-one mentoring.



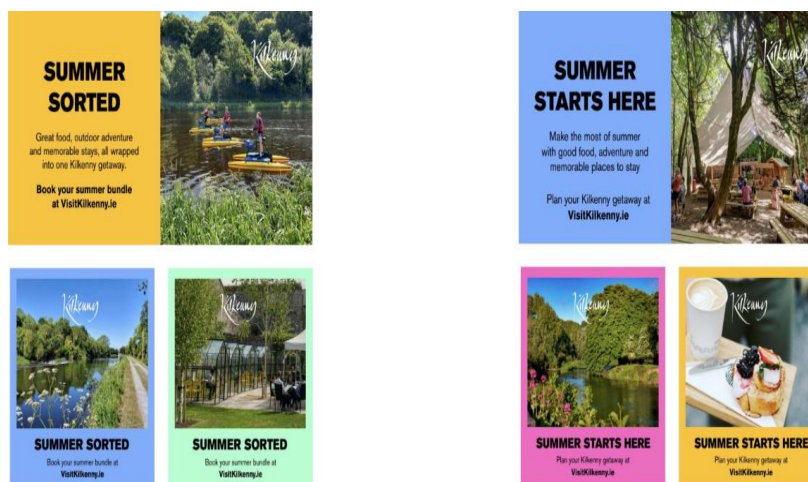
Business Support Roadshow – Graiguenamanagh



Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny in partnership with Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board, Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Kilkenny Intreo Office held a roadshow in Graiguenamanagh on 13th May. Attendees had a chance to speak directly with funding and support agencies representatives who answered specific questions, provide advice and help to identify the support and grants that are available to those already in business or with an ambition to start a new business. The roadshow provided an opportunity to connect with a network of support that can help navigate challenges of running a business.

Kilkenny Tourism and visitkilkenny.ie

Kilkenny Tourism continues its work in delivering its marketing plan for 2026. Our Summer 2026 campaign, “Summer Sorted” continues to encourage visitors to come to Kilkenny this year, to stay and explore for longer and to avail of great collaborative packages. Mays marketing efforts showcased over 22 attractions and activities engaged in the campaign and promoted arts, crafts, history and the outdoors here in Kilkenny.



“Outdoor Kilkenny” continues to encourage our guests to get out and immerse themselves in activity around the County. This campaign is a really positive intervention to support the Outdoor Activities Sector and works in conjunction with our main destination campaign.



Festivals and Events



Kilkenny County Council continues in its support of all local festivals and events that have a significant tourism impact on our City and County. Kilkenny County Council supported Kilkennys newest festival Mayhem which hosted a comedy event every night of May in the run up to Junes annual Cat Laughs Festival. The festival delivered great event across the City in the comedy vein with great artists featuring and intimate venues ensured a great atmosphere for festival goers.

LGMA Annual Tourism Conference

Roscommon County Council hosted this year's LGMA National Tourism Conference which was held in Kilonan Castle. This is an important event where tourism providers, business leaders and policy makers come together to exchange ideas and best practice on promoting the national tourism sector. The theme of this year's event was sustainable tourism delivery and sessions included discussion around just transition projects,

working with AI in marketing efforts, maximising the opportunity the Ryder Cup will deliver and investigation of best practice tourism collaboration throughout Europe.



Night Time Economy Pilot

Mayhem Comedy Festival

Mayhem Comedy Festival a new comedy festival for Kilkenny City from the team behind Cat Laughs launched on Friday May 1st at the Pembroke Hotel. The festival which is supported by the Kilkenny Night Time Economy Pilot Diversification Grant Scheme, saw comedy shows at venues throughout the City every night in the month of May.

Six after 6 – Summer Cultural Series

The Six after 6 - Summer Cultural Series will again bring many of the city's great attractions alive in the evenings for locals and visitors alike across the summer. Featuring 36 free and ticketed events from early June to early September, the series features programmed events at Medieval Mile Museum, Butler House & Garden, Saint Canice's Cathedral, Butler Gallery, The Smithwick's Experience and Rothe House & Garden.

The Six after 6 - Summer Cultural Series is supported by Kilkenny County Council, Fáilte Ireland – Ireland's Ancient East and the Kilkenny Night Time Economy Pilot



HOUSING

The Directorate of Housing incorporates a wide range of services for applicants and tenants to facilitate and support the provision of independent and supported accommodation. The following information gives the up-to-date progress for May 2026 under the various support services.

HOUSING CAPITAL



12 housing units in progress at Barrack Street, Goresbridge, Co. Kilkenny

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ABBEY HILL, THOMASTOWN

May Focus: Legal Phase of the Sales Process

Key Achievements:

- Completion of the Homeowners Guide for new purchasers
- 8 homeowners received keys and moved in
- Ongoing coordination with Boyd's to progress contracts and secure deposits
- Daily engagement with solicitors to ensure timely conveyancing
- Preparation and issuing of ADPAs through KCC Solicitor
- Organisation of equity-fund releases to buyers' solicitors
- Engaging with Revenue on Help to Buy

Status:

- All 22 homes reserved/sold
- 12 sales closed
- Homes progressing through contract exchange and completion
- 8 homes occupied

CHURCH VIEW, KILMACOW

May Focus: Final Sale & Legal Phase

Key Achievements:

- Final home sale secured
- Active management of queries and validations on the Affordable Purchase Portal
- Coordination with solicitors for conveyancing documentation
- Preparation and issuing of ADPAs
- Organisation of equity-fund releases
- Development finished by Michael Murphy Building Services and ready for occupation.

Status:

- 60 applications received
- All 13 homes reserved/sold
- 3 sales closed/2 homes occupied
- Homes progressing through contract exchange and completion
- 5 children enrolled in the local primary school, supporting school viability/funding
- Development fully complete and ready for occupation

AN TOBAR, FRESHFORD

Major Milestone: AHF funding approval for 10 homes received from Department on 1st May.

Sales/Marketing/Advertising

The Affordable Purchase Team, in collaboration with our Sales Agent Boyd's, commenced full preparation for the Sales, Marketing and Advertising campaign for the upcoming development. A comprehensive Marketing & Social Media Plan was developed, detailing all public-facing activity, engagement actions, timelines, and key milestones.

Work began immediately on:

- A dedicated website
- A high-quality sales brochure
- Coordinated public-engagement and social-media messaging

All activity remains on schedule, with all targets expected to be met ahead of the Portal Open Date: 17th June.

Scheme Overview:

- Delivered under the LAAPS Scheme
- Developed by Kilkenny County Council and built by Ormonde Construction
- Mix: 8 × 3-bed homes and 2 × 2-bed homes
- High-quality, energy-efficient homes designed to complement Freshford's heritage village setting

**Overall Programme Position**

- All Schemes: Abbey Hill, Church View & An Tobar advanced significantly during May.
- Abbey Hill and Church View remain fully reserved/sold with legal completions progressing steadily.
- 10 homeowners have already taken occupancy across the two completed schemes.
- Strong demand is confirmed across all locations, with high application volumes and full reservation achieved.
- Sales, marketing, and public-engagement preparations for the next development are on schedule, with all milestones aligned to the June 17 Portal.

HOUSING OPERATIONS STATISTICS

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY 2026	May	To-
Homeless Presentations	56	263
Prevention & Interventions	45	219
Emergency Service	6	57
Not Eligible/Did not Avail of Service	5	33
HAP Place Finder Service		
Number of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1 st day of month	39	
Number of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	0	3
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	1	11
Number of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month	38	
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported / created during month	8	33
Notices To Quit (NTQ'S)		
Valid NTQ's received	2	18
Number of NTQ solutions found	4	20
Provision of Emergency Accommodation		Avg Per Month
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation at 31 st May	34	33
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	6	11
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families	6	7
Households (<i>singles/couples</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front</i>	41	44
Households (Families) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front</i>	22	22

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY 2026	May	To-
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (Gross Need)	1,260	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (Net Need)	697	
Number of Social Housing Applications received	82	340
Number of applications incomplete / awaiting further information/clarification	36	160
Number of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	40	125
Number of applications assessed	37	130
Number of applications awaiting assessment	51	156

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) SUMMARY 2026	May	To-Date
Total active HAP tenancies	324	
New HAP tenancies set up	8	19
HAP tenancies allocated social housing	33	84
Closed HAP tenancies	48	107
HAP Rent Reviews	173	381
HAP other Tenancy Amendments	208	433

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS 2026	May	To-Date
Local Authority Social Housing offers of allocations	31	97
Approved Housing Body offers of allocations	3	41
RAS offers of allocations	1	4
LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations	35	142

TENANCY MANAGEMENT

COMPLAINT TYPE	Number of Complaints	Number Investigated	Number Ongoing	Number Closed
Drugs related; Violence; Racism; Threats & Intimidation	2	1	1	0
Damage to property, animal related (dog/horse/fowl); Refuse/ dumping/ hoarding	7	3	4	0
Noise; Parking/ boundary issues; Other	15	7	8	0
Total Number To-Date	147	64	70	13

MAINTENANCE CALLS 2026	May	To-Date
Number of Maintenance Calls	395	2,874
Number of maintenance calls that resulted in a call out	296	2,156

PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS

The housing grants budget is €3,349,286 made up of €2,846,893 (85%) grant funding and €502,393 (15%) Kilkenny County Council contribution for 2026.

GRANTS COMMITTED BUT NOT PAID		
Scheme	To Date	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	116	€1,372,270
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	8	€38,900
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	151	€1,278,192
Total	275	€2,689,362

GRANTS PAID OUT IN 2026		
Scheme	To Date	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	33	€381,065
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	3	€13,150
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	80	€501,614
Total	116	€895,829

HOUSING LOAN ACTIVITY 2026					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amount Approved	Number Paid	Amount Paid
Local Authority Home Loan	10	0	€0	2	€262,600
Local Authority Purchase and Renovate Loan	0	0	€0	0	€0
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0	0	€0
Total	10	0	€0	2	€262,600

SOCIAL HOUSING RELETS ACTIVITY 2026	MAY	TO DATE
Number of social housing relets completed	7	41
Number of social housing relets in progress		47

RETROFITTING ACTIVITY 2026	MAY	TO-DATE
Number of units retrofitted	3	15
Number of units in progress		38

PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS SUMMARY 2026	MAY	TO-DATE
Number of inspections completed by Kilkenny County Council staff	43	243
Number of inspections completed by external inspectors	0	21
Total Number of Inspections Completed	43	264

ENVIRONMENT

Kilkenny Community Groups Receive funding for Climate Action Projects

Kilkenny County Council and the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment are delighted to award €577,659 to 20 Kilkenny communities who will deliver a variety of local climate action projects.

Following a second round of funding and another competitive selection process 20 groups were awarded support under Phase 2 of the Community Climate Action Programme. The objective of this programme is to support and empower communities to take climate action and build low carbon, sustainable communities which help to contribute to national climate and energy targets.

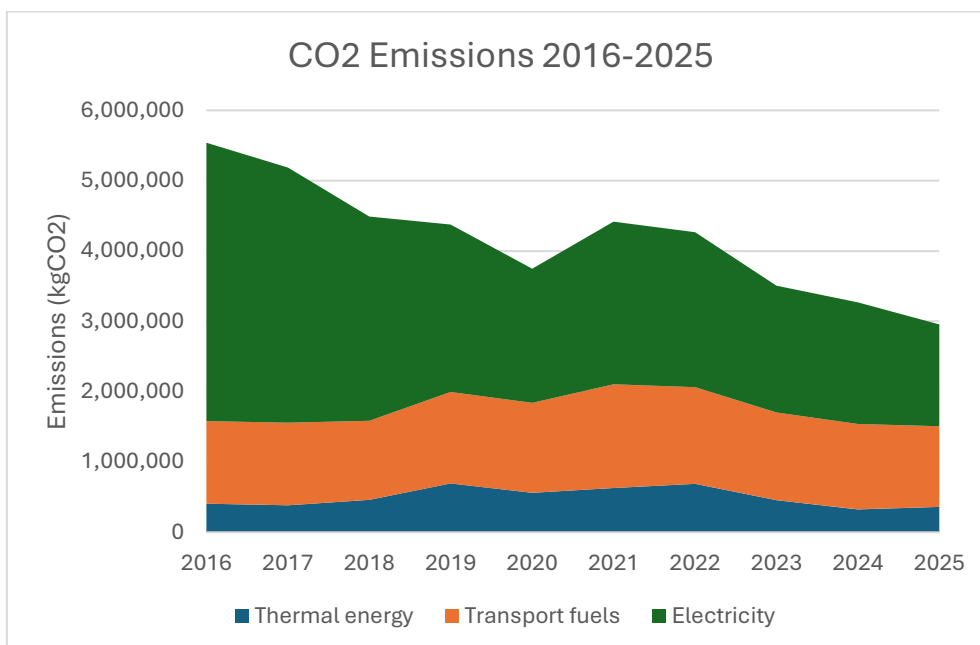
Welcoming the funding, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh said “*This funding is a tremendous support for the communities across Kilkenny who are bringing meaningful climate action to life, delivering real, hands-on efforts that make a difference. It not only supports their efforts but acknowledges the dedication behind them. With this much needed funding, we’re hopeful that even more community led sustainability projects will continue to emerge and grow.*”

The projects funded range from energy and lighting upgrades on community buildings, bike shelters to encourage cycling, water fountains to reduce plastic bottle use, planting for wildlife, community allotments, rainwater harvesting, hedgerow planting and much more.

Applicant	Funding Received
Castlecomer Enterprise Group	€15,000
Kells Sports Centre	€14,000
Kilkenny Allotment & Community Gardens Association	€3,200
Marian Hall	€7,000
TCAT – Three-fold Community Asset Trust	€800
The Acorn Project	€12,000
The Rower Community Hall	€24,667
Tullahought Community Centre	€32,500
Kilmacow Community Centre	€29,000
Ferrybank AFC	€39,500
SOS Kilkenny CLG	€16,000
Ballyfoyle Development Group	€42,500
Thomastown GAA Club	€37,000
Hugginstown District & Community Centre	€35,500
Stoneyford Development Association	€23,500
St. Canices Community Action	€23,000
Piltown GAA Club	€41,992
Urlingford Town Team	€61,500
Graiguenamanagh Canoe Club	€55,000
CRKC – Community Radio Kilkenny City	€64,000

CO2 Emissions

Kilkenny County Councils’ CO2 emissions reduced by 10% in 2025 compared to 2024, based on data submitted by the Council to the SEAI’s M&R system this month. This includes emissions from energy users like buildings, public lighting and Council fleet. Fossil fuel emissions were 2% lower than in 2024. Reduction in CO2 emissions is due to a 6 % reduction in energy consumption and 14% decarbonisation of the electricity grid.



The M&R system is a web-based software system through which public bodies such as Kilkenny County Council report energy, emissions and related data (Energy Projects, Building Stock Register, Vehicle Register & Procurement and Business Travel) to SEAI each year to enable SEAI to track progress towards energy and climate policy targets.

Kilkenny Home Energy Event - Newpark Hotel

The Climate Action team attended and presented at the recent Kilkenny Home Energy Expo at the Newpark Hotel. This event was attended by 270 homeowners who had an opportunity to meet with a wide range of local contractors and gain practical advice on how to make their homes more energy efficient. This event was a collaboration with the South East Energy Agency, Kilkenny City SEC, Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, Kilkenny County Council and the SEAI which showcased strong partnership and commitment to delivering climate action at a local level.

Events - PPN

The Climate Action Team also attended the Kilkenny PPN Spring-Summer Plenary and Networking event at the Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel which afforded an opportunity to meet and encourage citizens to make practical climate action changes in their own area.

WASTE

Waste Enforcement

The End of May saw the following Waste enforcement cases open. Waste enforcement has become a clear objective of the Environment department in the last few years with many cases progressing to the district court to ensure that we are taking a clear stance on illegal waste activities.

Waste enforcement

Waste enforcement
Cases in
prosecution = 9

Waste enforcement
cases opened in
2026 = 16

Waste Facility Permits

With increased pressure on the waste industry to provide licenced facilities to deal with the volumes of waste being generated, Kilkenny County Council is working with waste streams from End of Life vehicles, civic amenity sites, soil and stone sites, C&D sites and others to ensure compliance across the industries and provide licenced sites which are controlled environments to dispose of waste materials

AIR NOISE WATER

Water Quality – Farm Inspections

The target for 2026 is 308 inspections. Kilkenny County council staff are currently carrying out and conducting follow up and initial inspections for 2026 and highlighting sub basins to be nominated for inspections. To date, 99 initial GAP Inspections, 44 follow ups and 2 cross reports have been carried out.

Septic Tank Inspections

Kilkenny County Council have started inspections under NIP and currently have 8 inspections completed. The EPA have released the DWWTS Report for 2025. Kilkenny County Council are improving year on year with closing out historical septic tank inspections which is resulting in higher closure rates every year over all septic tank inspections. The results are inclusive of 2025 inspections so it's not specific to historical inspections as such. Kilkenny County Council have jumped from 57% in 2023 to 67% 2024 and now 69% in 2025. We're going in the right direction gradually and we will have more focus this year on closing out all current ones which should put a good dent in the numbers for 2026 results next year.

Noise

Kilkenny County Council are in the process of purchasing new noise monitors for 2026.

Air

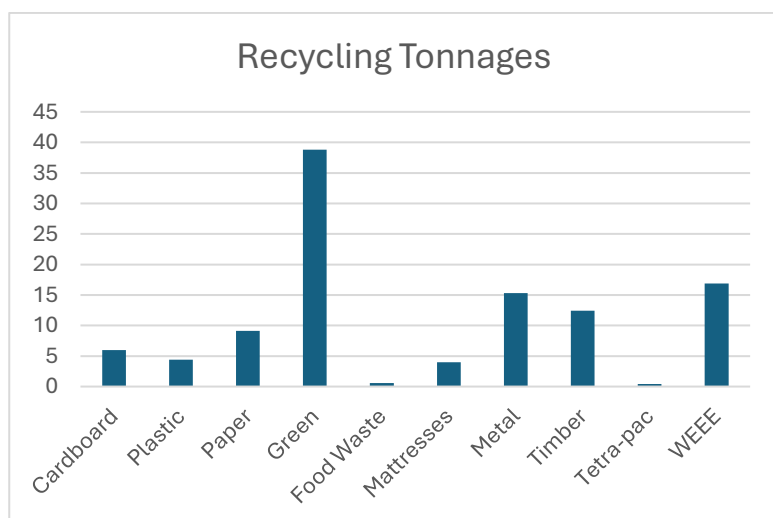
Staff will be monitoring the information received from air monitors. All solid fuel inspections have been completed for quarter 1. The remaining will be carried out in Q4.

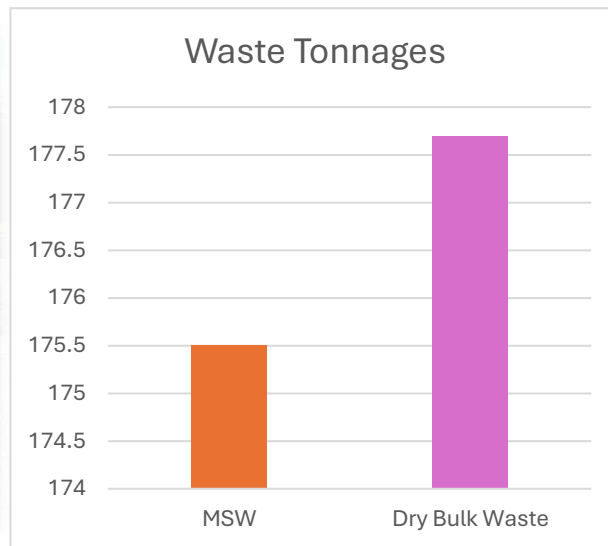
DISCHARGE LICENCES

Kilkenny County Council are in the process of following up with non-compliances for discharge licenses from 2025 results

Dunmore Civic Amenity Site (CAS)

Tonnages of Waste and the various recycling streams deposited at the Dunmore facility during the month of May can be seen in the infographic below.





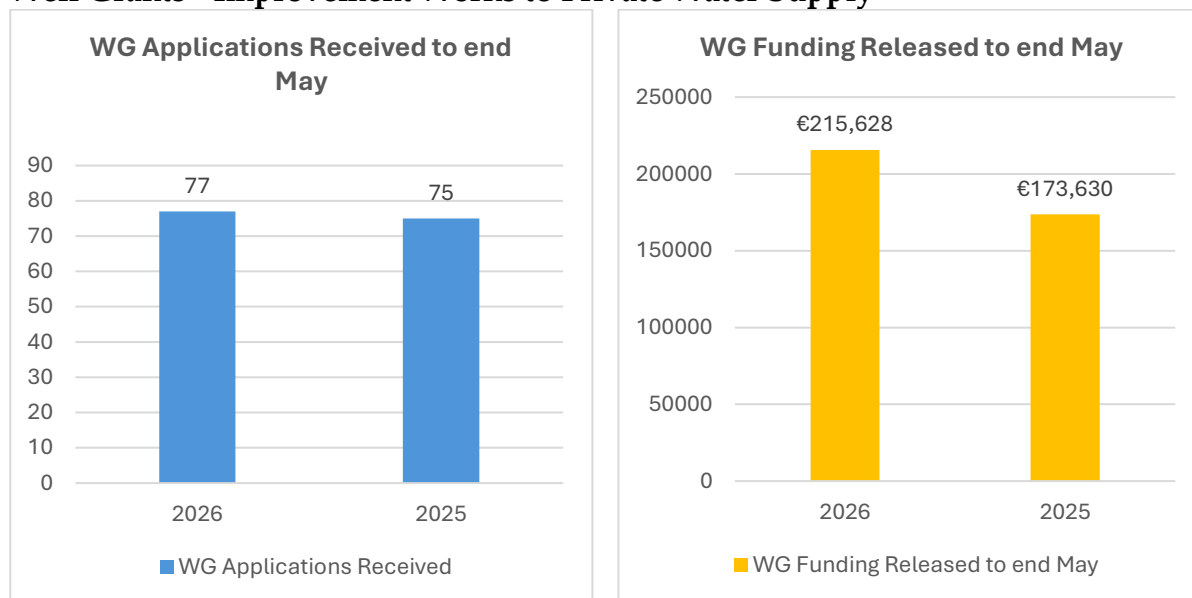
May saw 175.5t of MSW accepted into the site while 177.5t of Dry Bulk Waste entered the site. This is the first time monthly quantities of Dry Bulk exceeded Mixed Municipal waste. As part of the Landfill Aftercare the landfill gas flare continues to run 24hrs per day seven days per week extracting and burning approximately 35m³ of landfill gas per hour. The month of March also saw 28 tonnes of landfill Leachate tankered off site for treatment.

RURAL WATER

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026

Group Water Schemes who have funding approval from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are progressing planned works. It is expected that most works should be completed by year end.

Well Grants - Improvement Works to Private Water Supply



Subsidies for GWS Operations

Applications for Group Water Scheme (GWS) subsidies are now open. The closing date for receipt of completed applications is 30th June 2026.

Water Quality and Testing

Rural Water are currently tendering for an INAB laboratory to carryout water testing for the current year, 2026. Kilkenny County Council intend to take samples in June and September/October 2026.

BIODIVERSITY

National Biodiversity Week was held in between the 15th to 24th May. Events were held across the County, many organised by the members of the Biodiversity Working Group. Highlights included a bat walk with Bat Conservation Ireland in association with the Kilkenny Naturalists Field Club and the Castlecomer Discovery Park, a walk to explore the new nature reserve in Gales Hill as part of the Nore Vision “Our Rivers, a Living Lab: A Living Catchment and the launch of the Thomastown Community Biodiversity Action Plan.



To highlight the week, Kilkenny and Carlow County Councils collaborated with KCLR to run a week long campaign, highlighting different biodiversity projects, it complimented a local press campaign which featured highlighted various biodiversity champions across Kilkenny including Mick Wright, Jennie Castle and John Hayes. This activity aligns with Action 6.1 of the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.

Kilkenny Library Service ESKER Kits Relaunched

Environmental Science Kits for Ecological Recording (ESKER) were relaunched in association with the Kilkenny Library Service in May. The kits were originally launched in 2023 by The Heritage Council, the Biodiversity Office repackaged and created specific guides for equipment provided along with additional field guides to make the offering more user friendly to encourage more people to explore and record habitats and species in their local area. This activity aligns with Action 5.3 of the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.



Wild Kilkenny

15 participants undertook “Wild Kilkenny” a community biodiversity course. Established by the Biodiversity Office in collaboration with the Kilkenny Education Training Board, it is a 5 week part time course to create confident citizen scientists and is a way to build ecological recording capacity in the County. Feedback from a course participant illustrates how well received the course has been “Just want to say a massive thank you for establishing, organising and running this course, it has been immensely beneficial, enjoyable and I appreciate all of the information material we have received” The course aligns with Action 1.7 of the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.

LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEGRATION TEAM [LAIT]

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to play a vital role in supporting the integration of diverse communities across Kilkenny. Their work continues to focus on individuals in the following categories:

- Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) – Ukrainians
- International Protection Applicants (IPAs)
- Programme Refugees
- Those granted Refugee, Subsidiary Protection, or Permission to Remain status

Currently, Kilkenny is home to 355 Ukrainians accommodated in 12 properties contracted by the Department of Justice, Migration & Home Affairs. An additional 183 Ukrainians reside in Offer A Home properties and Irish Red Cross pledged homes, benefiting from the Accommodation Recognition Payment. Alongside them, 185 IPAs are housed in 3 Department-contracted properties.

Throughout May, LAIT continued delivering information, advice, and advocacy, including:

- 52 Ukrainians supported through 60 interventions, covering accommodation, education, finance, immigration and signposting to wider stakeholders.
- 86 Ukrainians attended 11 group Induction Sessions upon arrival at the DAC.
- 16 IPAs assisted with 30 interventions, primarily addressing immigration concerns, work permits, and accommodation queries.

Year-to-date, LAIT has provided 717 interventions to 498 individuals, underscoring their commitment to fostering inclusion and diversity within the community.

Events:

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to work closely with partner agencies. Here's a snapshot of what happened in May, 2026:

Africa Day - In collaboration with the local African community, LAIT organised an Africa Day celebration on Sunday, 24th May on The Parade. The event was a fantastic success and open to all, featuring a vibrant programme of song and dance performances, drumming workshops, and a wide variety of delicious African cuisine. It provided a wonderful showcase of culture, integration, and community spirit, creating a fun and inclusive atmosphere for everyone who attended.



Global Dance Club - The dance club featured in Graiguenamanagh's annual sheep drive festival – Dathanna. This popular community celebration took place on the June Bank Holiday with The Global Dance Club providing a great performance on the day. From the end of June, the Global Dance Club will move forward as an independent group. We wish them every success with this exciting and well-deserved venture.



Weekly Drop-In Clinic - Every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, LAIT hosts an open clinic at the Neighbourhood Hall, offering advice and assistance to those seeking support. Working in partnership at Tuesday clinic with HSE and Kilkenny Leader Partnership to expedite signposting to most queries.

Information Sessions - Ongoing at the Wallslough Designated Accommodation Centre, these sessions help new arrivals navigate integration processes and access accommodation supports.

Transition of Temporary Protection Supports for Ukrainians in Ireland

Ireland is transitioning its response to Ukrainians under Temporary Protection from an emergency model to a longer-term, sustainability-focused approach. Temporary Protection has been extended to March 2027, but State supports are being progressively reduced to encourage independence and labour market participation.

Key Changes

- ***Introduction of Transition Scheme:***

A new immigration pathway (expected September 2026) will allow eligible Ukrainians to move to a longer-term status (Stamp 4-type). Eligibility will require employment history and independent housing, reinforcing self-sufficiency.

- ***Withdrawal of State Accommodation:***

Commercial accommodation (e.g. hotels) will be phased out between August 2026 and March 2027. Individuals will increasingly need to secure private or community-based housing. Support will remain in place for vulnerable cases.

- ***Reduced Support for New Arrivals:***

Since late 2025, newly arrived Ukrainians are provided State accommodation for 30 days only, after which they must source their own housing.

- ***Reduction in Hosting Supports:***

The Accommodation Recognition Payment will reduce from €600 to €400 per month from October 2026, which may impact the availability of hosted accommodation.

- ***Voluntary Return Measures:***

A voluntary return programme is being developed for those wishing to return to Ukraine.

These reforms represent a significant shift towards reduced State provision and increased self-reliance. Local authorities, including Kilkenny County Council, will play a central role in managing housing demand and supporting integration during this transition period.

FIRE SERVICES

January to May 2026 Engagement

Fire Prevention

Fire Safety Certificates
Received - VIA online
BCMS & directly to HQ

44

Incidents

- Total Attended- 397
- Fires – 121
- Road Traffic
Collisions - 125

Garda/Ambulance Assist

26

False Alarms

41

Rescue / Removal Of Persons From Water

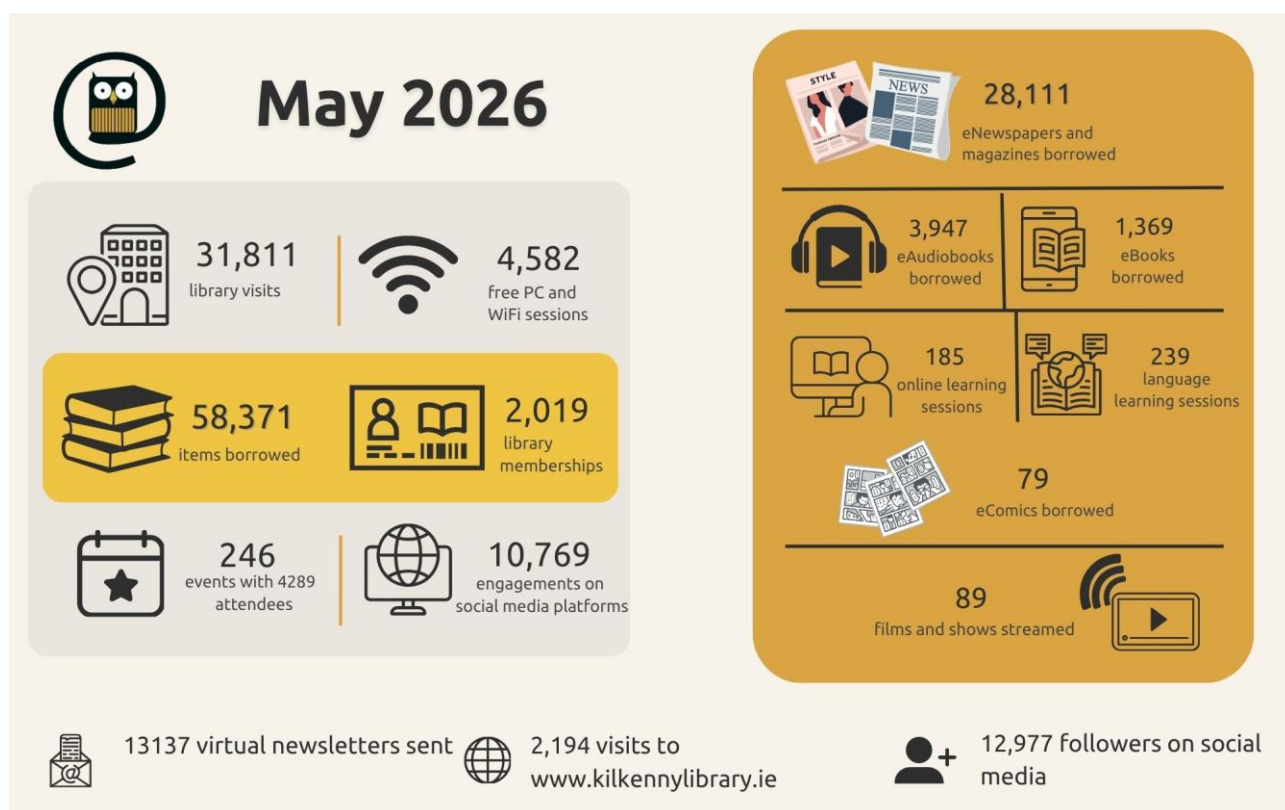
4

Domestic Fires

33

Vehicle Fires

LIBRARY



Bealtaine Festival

Kilkenny Library Service brought the spirit of Bealtaine festival to life throughout the month of May. Across the County, our libraries curated an engaging, and inclusive programme designed to inspire older people through arts, learning, and community connection. Throughout the month, libraries hosted a range of events: a crafts workshop in Ferrybank Library, an art and poetry session in Callan Library, reflective and mindfulness workshops in both Mayfair Library and Thomastown Library, an art workshop in Castlecomer Library, a floral art demonstration in Urlingford Library, a literary workshop in Graiguenamanagh Library, and a colour and makeup workshop in Loughboy Library.



Handy Helps Collection Launch

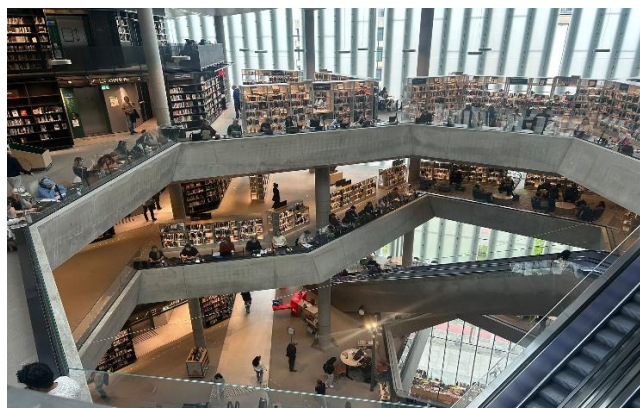
Our new Handy Helps collection was officially launched in Loughboy Library on Wednesday, 27th May as part of this year's Bealtaine Festival. The collection provides a curated range of practical equipment designed to support older members of our community in maintaining greater independence at home.

These carefully selected aids and gadgets assist with everyday tasks and activities. Packs include culinary, mobility and social aids. Packs were developed by Alan Dunne, our Age Friendly coordinator in consultation with HSE Occupational Therapy Services. Handy Helps packs is be available for borrowing from Mayfair Library, Loughboy Library, Thomastown Library, and Castlecomer Library.



Erasmus Library Study visit to Norway

Senior Executive Librarian Aisling Kelly joined Senior library managers from across public library services in Ireland on a study visit to libraries in Norway, funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The visit included visits to libraries, observation and meetings with library leaders to help develop leadership skills for delivery of more responsive services and supports, strengthen innovation and to expand learning access by sharing with others. Visits included National Library of Norway, Deichman Main Library, Deichman Tøyen, Lillestrøm Public Library and Lier Public Library. The visits offered an excellent opportunity to gain deeper insight into the very popular and highly community-focused Norwegian library services.



Local Studies Finland Collaboration

Alicia Dunphy, Library Staff Officer was invited on a study visit to Rauma, Finland, as part of the Voices of Heritage Community Group Training Project” – which was run by Kilkenny Leader Partnership. The training project sessions took place in Ferrybank & Castlecomer libraries. The trip highlighted the important role libraries play in preserving and sharing local heritage while supporting community-led activity. It demonstrated how storytelling, partnerships, and structured support can make heritage more accessible and engaging, and showed how libraries can further assist volunteers through space, resources, and collaboration. The experience will inform future local history initiatives in Kilkenny and strengthen ongoing community partnerships, including continued support for groups in Castlecomer and Ferrybank.

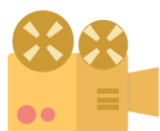


Thomastown Library

We were delighted to open the doors of our new library in Thomastown at the end of May. Over the past few weeks, our staff have been hard at work shelving books and preparing welcoming spaces for the community. The new library provides a vibrant cultural, educational, and community hub for the town, featuring a community room, study areas, PCs, printers, and self-service machines. The branch is open Monday to Saturday from 9am to 5pm, with extended hours until 8pm on Wednesday evenings.



Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



Digital Engagement

Library staff prepared, recorded, edited and published **256** posts and videos on our social media platforms in May. Our engagements for the month were **10,769** and our videos and reels had **12,142** views. Our virtual newsletter was sent to **13,137** email accounts.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



Library activities this month supported **SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing** by promoting active ageing, mental wellbeing and independent living through initiatives such as the Bealtaine Festival arts programme, mindfulness and reflection sessions, and the Handy Helps collection supporting older people at home.



They also supported **SDG 4: Quality Education** by encouraging lifelong learning and skills development through creative workshops, international knowledge exchange via Erasmus and Finland study visits, and enhanced access to heritage and community learning through collaborative library initiatives.

ARTS

Art of Change

Art of Change Youth Group and Schools Programme has ended for the Summer and will begin in the Autumn. From foraging, to cyanotype photography and cordial making and tasting with Kasia Kaminska to immersive 360 sketching, insect embodiment and macro filming of nature with Mairead Holohan and upcycling and mending skills with Lynn Haughton the School groups had an active April filled with unique opportunities that introduced them to new techniques and a range of artists working in different styles.

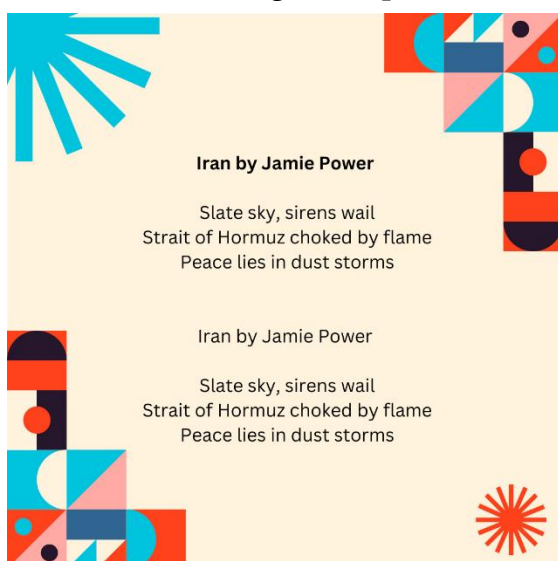


The Youth Group closed off the Leaf Out programme with a reflection session on the theme of the programme and the contents and workshops undertaken. During the month of April they took part in workshops with Thomas Duffy and Jules Micheal, looking at traditions and stories connected to Brideogs while creating their own.



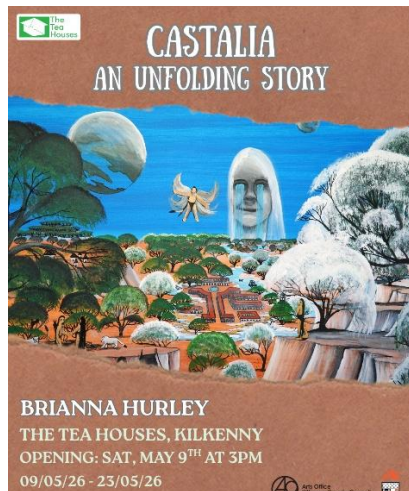
Rhyme Rag

Rhyme Rag poems are now being shared on the Arts Office an Instagram accounts and work is underway on the design of the publication. Two more schools will engage with the programme in the Autumn. So far this year workshops with Loreto, Colaiste Abhainn Rí, and Kieran's College took place.



TEAHOUSES

Castalia: An Unfolding Story



An exhibition by Brianna Hurley - *Castalia: An Unfolding Story*, launched on Saturday the 9th May. Hurley's vivid paintings conjure an imagined planet of hot red earth, lush and towering forests. Working with acrylic paint, pencil and acrylic marker, the artist constructs landscapes of striking chromatic intensity, alive with oases of colour and calm. The exhibition title is inspired by Hurley's artist book, *The Story of Castalia*, published in 2022 and launched at KCAT Art Centre. Brianna Hurley has been a studio artist at KCAT since 2018. She works with acrylic paint, pencil and acrylic marker, and has exhibited widely in Ireland and internationally. The exhibition was curated by Shannon Carroll.

At the Waterline, a new exhibition by artist and ecologist Tasneem Khan exploring the concept of islandness as a lens for change, adaptation and thinking about our relationship to place, launched on Friday, 29th May. Developed through Khan's long-term engagement with coastal, riverine and island environments, *At the Waterline* brings together mixed media photography, video and text, using layering as part of a process of mapping and remapping place through experience and observation. It is the artist's documentation of water journeys, through field-based observation and images, that functions as a form of visual note-taking. Across the work, Khan approaches the water's edge as a threshold, where a special set of conditions provide ways of understanding connection, isolation, evolution and interdependence across systems.

The exhibition transforms into a working space: part studio, part field station. *At the Waterline* invites visitors into an active process of research and exploration, the gallery provides a quiet, contemplative space to encourage slow looking: a moment to pause, breathe, notice and reflect on how we encounter and understand the world around us. Alongside the works, visitors are encouraged to contribute their own observations and responses into a shared logbook. In this way, the exhibition extends beyond viewing into a collective act of mapping, creating a living text holding the thoughts and experience of all those involved. The exhibition prompts a simple question: what becomes visible when we choose to look more slowly? Curated by Shannon Carroll.

ARTISTS SUPPORTS

In light of the new revenue guidelines we organised a session to support artists in navigating this new system. The session included - clear systems for managing accounts as an artist, artists' management of fees, travel expenses and materials, information on better understanding of ROS, MyAccount and Income Tax Forms and finished with a Q & A.

Creative Kilkenny

During May the Creative Kilkenny programme demonstrated strong alignment with key strategic priorities, supporting heritage and biodiversity, fostering vibrant and sustainable communities, and enhancing access, participation and meaningful engagement across diverse audiences.



Folk singer Susan O'Neill brings her music to Graiguenamanagh



Participatory song exchange workshops and traditional music sessions in Graiguenamanagh as part of Bealtaine Festival

Keep Her Lit, delivered a dynamic Bealtaine Gathering in Graiguenamanagh, celebrating the arrival of summer through a rich programme of arts, music, biodiversity and Irish language activity. The day included the *Glór Bearú* bilingual river walk led by Maura Brennan and Siobhán de Paor, participatory song exchange workshops, traditional music sessions with local performers, and a headline folk concert by Susan O'Neill.

The Butler Gallery successfully brought together artists including Renata Pekowska, Andy Ingamells and Jade Butler to deliver a highly collaborative and innovative National Drawing Day, featuring immersive activities such as "Listen and Draw" and outdoor sensory based workshops.

The programme achieved strong community engagement outcomes, providing inclusive, accessible creative experiences that enhanced participation, supported diverse audiences, and fostered meaningful connections through holistic artistic practice.

The Cushendale Shearing Festival showcased a strong commitment to heritage, sustainability and local economic development, integrating the Global Dance Club to deliver a multicultural and environmentally conscious event. This collaborative approach celebrated rural traditions while fostering inclusive participation and supporting local enterprise through community led artistic engagement and volunteerism.

This event also showcased the Global Dance club who elevated the event building intercultural connections in a rural community.

Continuing to broaden access to high level artistic practice through initiatives such as the "Belong" project, where artist Jade Butler worked with participants from migrant communities (*including Nigeria, Bangladesh, Ukraine, Romania and Pakistan*) to develop portrait painting skills in collaboration with Kilkenny Leader Partnership, with resulting artwork to be showcased at the Tea House Gallery later this year. Preliminary feedback highlights strong positive impacts, with participants reporting feeling included and supported, alongside increased confidence and a greater willingness to engage in future creative opportunities.

Cruinniú na nÓg Festival was launch on the 18th of June. The programme was shaped directly through direct youth consultation ensuring the voices of young people were heard. Workshops progressed strongly across the County during May, such as Graiguenamanagh Beavers, St. Kieran's NS, Kilmacow, Youth Club and participants in Callan and Loreto Special Unit, successfully activated public spaces, supporting placemaking, regeneration and community engagement in advance of the festival on June 6th. Additionally, "My Teddy Bear" workshops led by artist Carrie Lynam at St. Luke's General Hospital provided inclusive creative opportunities in a healthcare setting, with work to be exhibited in the hospital gallery from June to August.

Participants from TADA Theatre's Cruinniú na nÓg *Céad Focal* film project attended the national launch at Grangegorman, where they met Minister Patrick O'Donovan and were featured in interviews on Cúla4 and Cúla Nuacht, raising the profile of their work and engagement with the Irish language. Feedback from the family who attended from Thomastown representing Kilkenny, highlighted the significant positive impact of the experience, strengthening confidence and increasing awareness of the importance of using and sustaining the Irish language among young people.

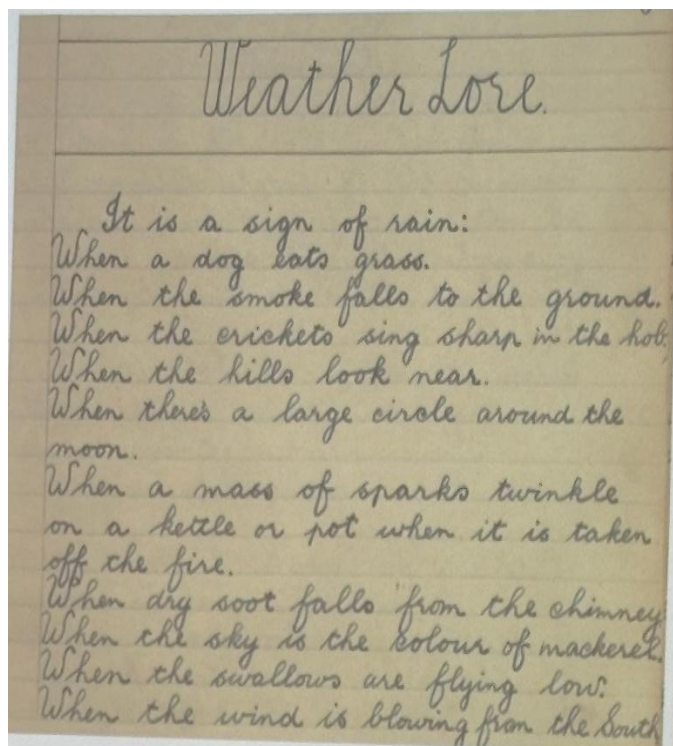


TADA Theatre participants from the Céad Focal film project pictured at the Cruinniú na nÓg national launch in Grangegorman with Minister Patrick O'Donovan.

Changing Seasons, Changing Times – Recording Kilkenny’s Living Heritage

The Heritage Office in partnership with UCD’s School of Geography facilitated four community conversations across County Kilkenny throughout the month of May. *Athrú* is a climate action project funded by Creative Ireland to record and preserve Kilkenny’s living heritage that is a risk due to climate change and biodiversity loss.

The Workshops which took place in Kilkenny City, Urlingford, Mullinavat and Thomastown were well-attended by a highly engaged audience who were happy to share memories and traditions. Local media also generated strong interest in the project through radio interviews and newspaper advertising. This project is an action of the *County Kilkenny Heritage Strategy, 2026-30* and the *County Kilkenny Climate Action Plan, 2024-29*.



Registration now open for National Heritage Week, 15-23 August

Registration for National Heritage Week is now open! This year’s theme ‘Heritage at Risk’ encourages us to explore the built, natural and cultural aspects of our heritage that are endangered, for us to reimagine and revive these sites, artefacts and practices.

Last year over 60 events took place across Kilkenny to celebrate our local heritage and we hope to build on this for 2026. For more information and to register your event see: www.heritageweek.ie



FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of May is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €52.4m compared with the annual budget of €129m.

Table 1	Actual YTD May 2026	Budget Full Year 2026
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	14,397	36,921
Road Transport & Safety	10,998	33,045
Water Services	2,307	5,928
Development Management	5,381	16,101
Environmental Services	7,412	19,972
Recreation & Amenity	3,649	10,229
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	158	348
Miscellaneous Services	4,577	6,847
Central Management Charges for Allocation	3,505	
OVERALL TOTAL	52,385	129,391

Rates Invoices 2026

The annual rate invoices for 2026 totalling €25.8 million were issued to 2883 rate customers in February. This represented an increase of 4% in the 2025 figure. A waiver of 50% of the increase was granted to all customers with a bill of €3,000 or less. 1800 customers received this waiver. Commercial rates are payable in full from 1st January 2026.

A prompt payment discount of 8.3% (*capped at €300 per rate account*) is available for customers who pay bill in full before end of May 2026 or enter into a monthly payment plan before April 2026.

Finance Update

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the five month period up to the end of May 2026. The Local Government Auditor has commenced his audit of Annual Financial Statement 2025.